(12) UK Patent Application (19) GB (11) 2 235 325 (13) A

(43) Date of A publication 27.02.1991

(21) Application No 8918539.1

(22) Date of filing 15.08.1989

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(51) INT CL[5]
G09F 9/00

(52) UK CL (Edition K)
G5C CA342 CA350 CHA

(56) Documents cited
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(58) Field of search
UK CL (Edition J) G5C CHA CHC CHD
INT CL[4] G09F, G09G
Online database: WPI

(54) Board games

(57) An electronically alternate display 2 is in the form of a games board. The display is a liquid crystal display of the type that requires no power to maintain the display. The display may be provided with tactile or touch sensitive switches 7.

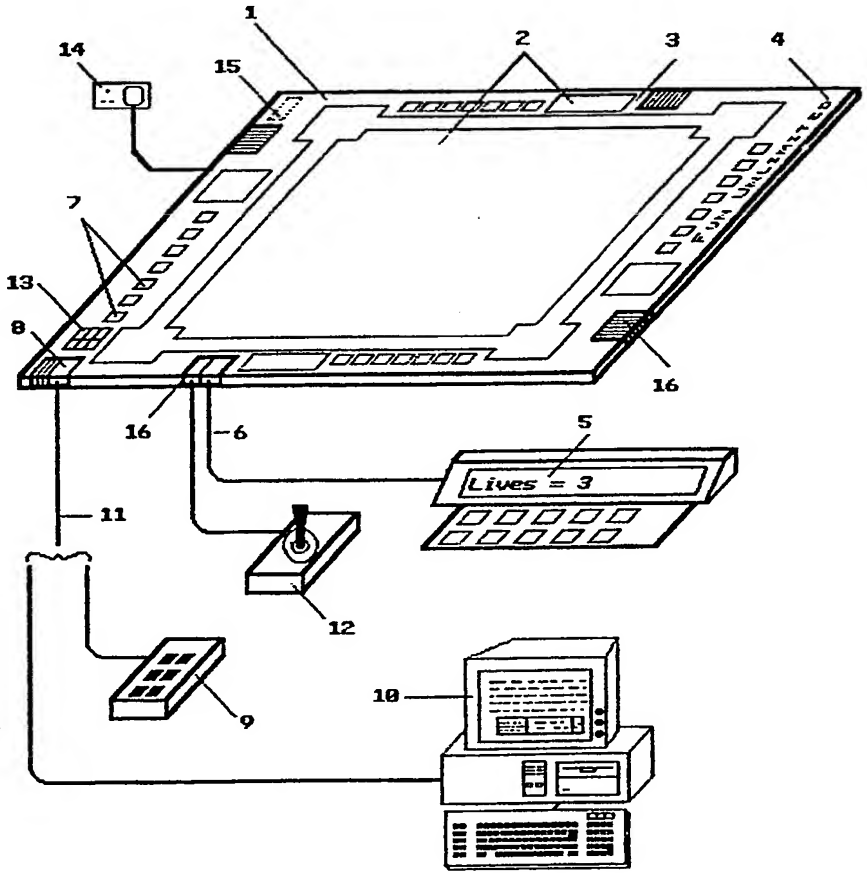

Figure 1

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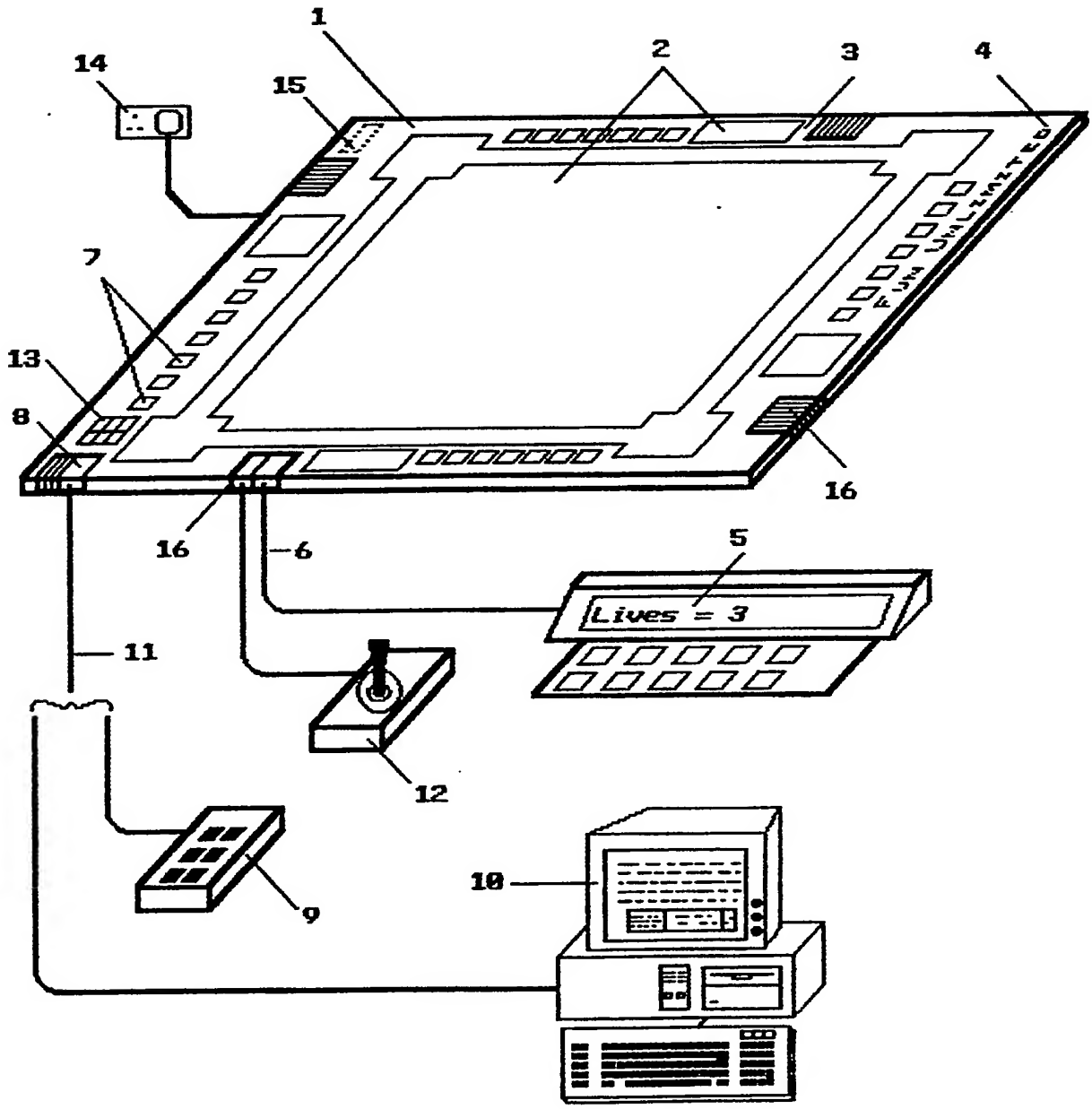

Figure 1

BOARD GAMES

The present invention relates to a programmable, single or compendium games board of any size or shape and more particularly to games boards in which the information can be automatically updated or changed as the game or games progress.

The games board also has a memory enabling one or more games to be stored.

Present games boards comprise of printed cardboard or plastic and additional playing pieces. These can be purchased from games shops and general stores etc. The games board may show a basic layout of the game to be played, e.g. rooms in a house, and additional playing pieces are used to play the game.

It is the object of the present invention to provide a programmable games board which only needs to be purchased once. The games board will have in its memory a selection of games or other features from which the user can display and play by choice from a menu. One may choose to buy or rent from a library or mobile distributor preprogrammed cartridges or other programming devices of different games which can be used to program the games board. Playing pieces can be graphically incorporated in the games board so as to minimise the number of items needed and to avoid loss. If preferred the user may choose to buy the actual playing pieces to play a particular game.

Once the games board has been programmed the programming means may be removed or retained.

According to the present invention there is provided a programmable games board to display information relating to a game or other features, the information being alterable by electrical or other control means. The games board may be powered by solar, mains, battery or other similar means.

In a preferred embodiment the games board comprises of a programmable display of the type described in British patent number 2146787. The display once established requires no power supply to maintain itself except when updating or changing the displayed information. The games board will have the use of colour, graphics and animation.

Preferably the games board may include an electrical terminal, both input and output information, which cooperates with an external input/output device to enable the games board to be programmed. This will enable the games board to be interfaced with a computer for the transference of data and information.

Joysticks or other remote devices and separate displays can also be used with the games board. The games board may support and display, via the input/output link, computer and video type games.

Preferably the games board includes an electronic memory in which information relevant to the game, but not necessarily needing to be displayed, can be stored. The memory will also be capable of storing one or more games.

Embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawing, Figure 1, which shows a games board according to the present invention.

The games board *1* comprises of display areas *2* surrounded by a border area *3* which may be plain or contain alterable or non-alterable information or advertising etc. The display *5*, of which there would normally be one per player, can be connected via its specific port *16* and may then be used for transferring information relevant to the player or players of a particular game, via line *6*.

The display areas *2*, *3* and *5* are preferably of the liquid crystal type such as specified in the above mentioned British patent number 2146787.

The information displayed may be permanently printed, i.e. manufacturer's name *4* and any other information, such as the game layout, may be alterable by suitable programming of the games board *1* via the input/output port *8* using programming devices *9* or computer *10*, via line *11*.

The games board *1* may be addressed pixel by pixel and therefor is capable of displaying alphanumeric and graphical characters which may be animated.

The games board display area *2* and each extra individual player's display *5* may be in monochrome or colour.

The games board display area *2* and individual player buttons *7* may be of the tactile or touch sensitive type for ease of use.

The games board *1* may have an internal memory of the read/write or read only type which may hold additional information to that already being displayed which is directly connected to receive data from display *5* or port *8* via lines *6* and *11* respectively when suitably addressed. This makes it possible to erase an existing game and then either access a games menu or insert a games cartridge *9* or computer *10*.

The games board *1* may have facilities for other peripheral devices such as joysticks *12*, separate displays *5*, monitors *10* and other remote devices.

The games board *1* and added displays *5* may be powered by solar *13*, mains *14* or battery *15* power sources. Power is only needed when updating or programming and it is possible to power only those sections being used or all of it when necessary.

The game currently being played can be left at a specific point and place of play which can be maintained until such time as the

game is to be continued.

CLAIMS

1. A programmable games board to display information relating to a game or other features, the information being alterable by electrical or other control means.

2. A programmable games board as claimed in claim 1 in which the power for the board may be solar, mains or battery.

3. A programmable games board as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 in which the information is in the form of a programmable display, and in which the display, once established requires no power supply to maintain itself.

4. A programmable games board as claimed in claim 3 in which the display is in colour with graphics and animation.

5. A programmable games board as claimed in claim 4 in which the board includes an electrical terminal for both input and output of information, which cooperates with an external device to enable the games board to be programmed externally.

6. A programmable games board as claimed in claim 5 in which the board supports and displays via the input/output link computer and video type games.

7. A programmable games board as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6 in which the board includes an electronic memory in which information relating to a game or games is stored.

8. A programmable games board substantially as described with reference to the accompanying drawings.